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Department of State

TELEGRAM

80290

SECRET 433

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ACTION SS-45

INFO OCT-01 /046 W

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R 111612Z FEB 71
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2049

SECRET SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 0683

EXDIS

SUBJ: COMMENTS BY AVEROFF AND MARKEZENIS ON LOWENSTEIN-MOOSE
VISIT

1. AT DINNER PARTY EVENING FEBRUARY 10, FORMER FOREIGN
MINISTER AVEROFF AND LEADER OF PROGRESSIVE PARTY MARKEZENIS
SEPARATELY APPROACHED PAO ON LOWENSTEIN-MOOSE VISIT (BOTH
MEN SAW STAFF DEL AT REQUEST EMBASSY).

2. AVEROFF SAID THAT IF HE HAD BEEN FOREIGN MINISTER, HE
WOULD HAVE INFORMED USG THAT LOWENSTEIN AND MOOSE PNG AFTER
THEY HAD MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN AMBASSADORS ACCREDITED TO
GREEK GOVERNMENT; AND FACT THAT PRESENT GOVERNMENT DID NOT
TAKE THIS STEP MERELY A PROOF OF ITS WEAKNESS. FURTHERMORE,
HE WOULD NOT HAVE PERMITTED THEM TO SEE PERSONS WHO HAD BEEN
DISMISSED BY GOVERNMENT, SUCH AS PESMAZOGLOU, ROUFOS, AND
XYDIS. (EMBASSY ARRANGED MEETING WITH PESMAZOGLOU. THIS
IS FIRST WE HAVE HEARD OF STAFF DEL MEETING WITH GREEK
DIPLOMATS ROUFOS AND XYDIS, BOTH OF WHOM DISMISSED BY REGIME.)
AVEROFF SAID HE HAD TALKED WITH STAFF DEL FOR ABOUT AN HOUR
AND A HALF. HE FOUND LOWENSTEIN AND MOOSE ATTRACTIVE PERSONALI-
TIES, AND HE THOUGHT THEIR VISIT MIGHT SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE
IF IT GENERATED SOME ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON REGIME. HE HAD
CAUTIONED STAFF DEL, HOWEVER, THAT PRESSURE MUST BE EXERCISED
WITHIN LIMITS OR IT WOULD MERELY ANTAGONIZE REGIME TO POINT
THAT IT INFLUENCED IN WRONG DIRECTION.

3. AVEROFF SAID HE HAD DEVELOPED THESIS WITH STAFF DEL
THAT GREATEST DANGER IN PRESENT SITUATION WAS NOT FROM REGIME
ITSELF BUT FROM MIDDLE-GRADE OFFICERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO

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INHERIT POWER FROM PAPADOPOULOS AND HIS ASSOCIATES. BOTH PAPADOPOULOS AND ANGELIS AWARE OF THIS PROBLEM, BUT PRIME MINISTER HAD HIS HANDS FULL TRYING TO DEAL WITH DAY-TO-DAY PROBLEMS AND HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO EFFECTIVELY TO BRING THIS GROUP UNDER CONTROL. AVEROFF SAID THAT HIS CONTACTS CONVINCED HIM THERE WERE SEVERAL HUNDRED OFFICERS AT MAJOR AND LT. COL. LEVEL WHO HAD NASSERITE AMBITIONS. THEY WERE HIGHLY NATIONALISTIC, NARROW MINDED, AND DETERMINED TO PERPETUATE MILITARY RULE. ANGELIS WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY IN EFFECTING THEIR TRANSFER, AND WHILE HE MIGHT EVENTUALLY RID THE SERVICES OF SOME OF THESE PEOPLE, MAJORITY WOULD REACH RANK OF COLONEL AND BRIGADIER AND WOULD CONSTITUTE SERIOUS OBSTACLE TO RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE. ALREADY THESE PERSONS EXERCISED CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE OVER SELECTION AND TRAINING OF NEW CADETS.

AVEROFF ALSO NOTED THAT LOWENSTEIN AND MOOSE HAD TRIED TO SOUND HIM OUT ON WHAT KIND OF RELATIONS AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES HAD WITH OPPOSITION. AVEROFF SAID HE REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THIS SUBJECT OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD NO CAUSE FOR COMPLAINT.

MARKEZENIS TOLD PAO THAT HE HAD TAKEN LINE WITH STAFF DEL THAT TIME NOT RIPE FOR ATTEMPT TO CHANGE GOVERNMENT, SINCE IT PRESENTLY IN FIRM CONTROL. EVENTUALLY, HOWEVER, REGIME WOULD RUN INTO TROUBLE OVER ONE OF A NUMBER OF ISSUES, SUCH AS CYPRUS, OR SPILL-OVER INFLATION FROM WESTERN EUROPE. AT THAT TIME OPPONENTS OF REGIME SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO UNSEAT GOVERNMENT BUT OFFER COOPERATION IN GETTING IT OUT OF BAD SITUATION. IN THIS WAY REGIME COULD EVENTUALLY BE KEPT OUT OF POWER.

MARKEZENIS ALSO TOOK EXCEPTION TO STAFF DEL MEETING WITH FOREIGN AMBASSADORS, PARTICULARLY SINCE THEY CHOSE TO MEET WITH PERSONS HAVING DIFFERENT VIEW OF GREEK SITUATION THAN THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. (REFERENCE TO NORWEGIAN CHARG'E BULOWSEN AND ITALIAN AMBASSADOR D'ORLANDI, ONLY TWO DIPLOMATS WITH WHO STAFF DEL WISHED TO MEET. THEY ALSO SAW DUTCH AMBASSADOR AFTER WE SUGGESTED THAT THEY MIGHT WISH TO OBTAIN MORE BALANCED VIEW.) ACCORDING MARKEZENIS, LOWENSTEIN AND MOOSE ALSO RAISED WITH HIM QUESTION OF STATE DEPARTMENT'S RELATIONS WITH OPPOSITION ELEMENTS. MARKEZENIS SAID HE

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COUNTERED BY ASKING WHO WAS IN CHARGE OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT--
PRESIDENT NIXON, STATE DEPARTMENT, SENATE, OR WHO? HE FOUND
QUESTION STRANGE FROM AMERICAN OFFICIALS SINCE USG HAD REPRESENTATIVE IN GREECE IN PERSON OF AMBASSADOR.

7. MARKEZENIS NOTED RATHER INDIGNANTLY THAT AT ONE POINT
STAFF DEL HAD COMMENTED TO HIM THAT THEY HAD FOUND SITUATION
IN GREECE WORSE THAN IN POLAND. MARKEZENIS SAID HE REPLIED
THAT IF THIS WERE THEIR CONCLUSION, THEN IT WAS OBVIOUS THEY
UNDERSTOOD NOTHING AT ALL. THEY HAD COMPLAINED TO HIM THAT
ALTHOUGH THEY HAD EASY ACCESS TO OPPOSITION, THEY HAD HAD
DIFFICULTY IN SEEING MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT. DID THEY
REALLY THINK THIS WOULD BE THE CASE IN POLAND, WHERE THEY
WOULD BE ABLE TO SEE NO ONE BUT MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT?
(WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT STAFF DEL MADE SUCH A
COMMENT TO MARKEZENIS SINCE LOWENSTEIN MADE PRECISELY SAME
REMARK TO DCM.)
GP-1.

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INFO: OCT-01 1046 W

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R 111612Z FEB 71
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2050

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EXDIS:

8. MARKEZENIS ALSO SAID TO PAO THAT HE FOUND ONE OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S WEAKEST POINTS ITS INABILITY TO ATTRACT GOOD PEOPLE. HE FELT THAT WITH EACH CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, LEVEL OF COMPETENCE DECLINED. IN HIS USUAL EGOCENTRIC MANNER, MARKEZENIS SAID, "IF I WERE IN CHARGE OF THINGS AND ASKED TEN GOOD MEN TO JOIN THE GOVERNMENT, EIGHT WOULD ACCEPT. IF PAPADOPOULOS ASKS TEN GOOD MEN TO JOIN THE GOVERNMENT, TWELVE WOULD REFUSE." MARKEZENIS MAY HAVE WELL MADE SIMILAR COMMENT TO STAFF DEL.

9. COMMENT: WHILE STAFF DEL MAY TRY TO DISMISS AVEROFF AND MARKEZENIS AS "COLLABORATORS", WE SUSPECT THEY GOT SOME FLAVOR OF STRONG FEELING AMONG MOST GREEKS AGAINST FOREIGNERS LECTURING THEM. WHAT AVEROFF AND MARKEZENIS HAVE TOLD US CONFIRMS WHAT ALREADY FAIRLY APPARENT FROM STAFF DEL'S OWN COMMENTS: THAT THEY ARE TRYING TO BUILD UP CASE THAT EMBASSY HAS CUT ITSELF OFF FROM OPPOSITION. ASIDE FROM APPOINTMENTS ARRANGED BY EMBASSY, THEIR CONTACTS WERE HEAVILY WEIGHTED IN FAVOR OF REGIME'S MOST STRIDENT OPPONENTS, WHO NO DOUBT WOULD BE EAGER TO SUPPORT THIS THESIS. FOR EXAMPLE, WE NOTE FROM MEMORANDUM DISTRIBUTED BY KOTHRIS IN WASHINGTON THAT HE TOOK LINE THAT EMBASSY HAS "SUSPENDED ANY SERIOUS AND SUSTAINED CONTACTS WITH THE LEGAL LEADERSHIP OF THE GREEK PEOPLE, THUS BASING THEIR OFFICIAL REPORTS TO THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT ON ONE-SIDED BIASED SOURCES, I.E., THE GREEK JUNTA." WE TOLD STAFF DEL SUCH STATEMENTS HARDLY DISINTERESTED. AS REPORTED ATHENS 361, KOTHRIS CONTACTED MISSION OFFICER WHO KNOWS HIM WELL FOR HELP IN EXPEDITING VISA. THIS OFFICER HAS HAD LUNCH WITH KOTHRIS THREE OR FOUR TIMES:

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IN THE PAST YEAR AND SEEN HIM ON A SIMILAR NUMBER OF OCCASIONS
AT SOCIAL FUNCTIONS. HE ESTIMATES THAT, IN ADDITION,
KOTHRIS HAS APPROACHED HIM ON THE AVERAGE OF ONCE A MONTH
ON ONE MATTER OR ANOTHER.

GP-1.

TASCA.

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